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*Mr. K. K. Kuruvila :—*The time has not come for legislation in this matter. If it comes to that, I would prefer a Commission to hold a thorough enquiry. But my opinion is to leave matters alone.

Mr. K. C. Mamman Mappilla :— A Commission should be appointed to enquire into the matter.

*Mr. Kuruvila Thomman :—*I have no decided ideas on the subject.

*Mr. Kuriakose :—*The Church authorities should be consulted.

*Mr. Paul Daniel :—*I see no necessity for legislation.

*Mr. W. J. John :—*I think legislation is necessary.

*Mr. P. M. Chacko :—*Legislation will be useful.

*Dewan's reply :—*The views of the several Members are noted.

20. Disabilities of converts to Christianity in the matter of inheritance & certain objectionable words in the Marumakkattayam Bill affecting Christian sentiments.

Mr. Stephen Joseph (Member, Roman Catholic Associations, Quilon, Trivandrum and Nagercoil) said that, in several previous Sessions of the Assembly, the same subject had been repeatedly brought forward, by not less than six delegates representing different Associations of Christian interest. These Members had fully and clearly pointed out the necessity for legislation. But the Government were not pleased to take a favourable view of the representation. The Member said that it was therefore a matter of deep regret and disappointment to the constituencies, to hear that their reasonable requests for impartial and equitable laws, were rejected or taken no notice of, because of the existence of certain hide-bound customs of a different community. In the Third Session of the Assembly, the then Dewan said that interference with the law of inheritance was beset with numerous difficulties, and it was not expedient that Government should undertake legislation in the present circumstances of the country. The replies at the two previous Sessions were neither encouraging nor decisive. The Member requested that Government might be pleased to reconsider the question and take early steps to pass an Act, removing the disabilities of converts to Christianity in the matter of inheritance.

*Dewan's reply :—*Noted.

21. Judicial matters.

Mr. K. Sankara Pillai (Member, Kottarakara Taluk) brought to the notice of Government that the transaction of business in the Munsiffs' Courts was very unsatisfactory. He said that there were large arrears in all classes of Courts and in almost all branches of work. He also pointed out

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that the presiding officers only decided cases but left the work of the Courts entirely to the gumastas who mis-managed things. The Member also adverted to the mal-practices of the clerks of the Kottarakara Munsiff's Court.

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Dewan's reply.—Noted.

Inconvenience resulting from investing one officer with judicial and executive powers at the same time.

Mr. C. Raman Tampi (Member, Quilon Taluk) stated that, as the Tahsildar-Magistrates had to perform judicial and executive functions, people were put to much inconvenience and trouble. As the Tahsildars had to tour in different parts of their taluks in connection with their revenue work the parties and their pleaders also had to follow wherever the Magistrates went. The scheme proposed by the High Court *re* Magistrate-Munsiffs was also not satisfactory. Those conversant with litigation in Travancore knew that, in many property-suits, there was always a prelude in the shape of a criminal case. The Magistrate, after deciding the case in one way, could not be expected to take a different view, when the matter came up in the shape of a civil suit. Hence, as far as possible, there ought to be Magistrates separate from Tahsildars; and there should not be Magistrate-Munsiffs as proposed by the High Court. The Member proposed that, as the financial difficulties that might have to be met in relieving the District Magistrates completely of their revenue work were great, the following changes might be made for the present, *viz.*,

(1) The Division Assistants might be exclusively put in charge of the Criminal Appellate work.

(2) They might be allowed to deal with bail applications filed with appeals. At present, the Division Assistants could deal with only such appeals as were transferred to them by the District Magistrates. The Member suggested that the law might be amended in this respect.

The following Members were then requested by the Dewan to give their opinions in regard to the advisability of having Munsiff-Magistrates' Courts, in lieu of Tahsildar-Magistrates :—

Mr. M. Madhavan Tampi.—I am in favour of Magistrate-Munsiffs.

Mr. K. Madhavan Pillai.—I would rather leave things as they are at present.

Mr. K. Raman Tampi.—I think the Magistrate-Munsiff system will not work satisfactorily.

Mr. M. K. Govinda Pillai.—I am not in favour of Magistrate-Munsiffs.